

## **Chairman Kucinich Challenges FDA's Rush to Approve Genetically Engineered Salmon for Human Consumption**

### *Points out Serious Concern of Effects on Human Health and Environment*

Washington -- Congressman Dennis Kucinich (D-OH), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Domestic Policy and long-time advocate of sustainable agriculture and environmental issues, sent a letter to the Deputy Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) demanding that the public be given a more meaningful opportunity to weigh in on the FDA's decision-making process on proposed genetically engineered (GE) salmon.

"For the first time, the FDA could approve the release of an animal for human consumption that has been genetically modified. These are unprecedented circumstances and many scientific questions remain unanswered. I am disturbed by the FDA's efforts to ram the decision through without due consideration," Kucinich said.

The Atlantic salmon in question has been genetically altered to grow at twice the rate of natural salmon. However, little is known about the long term health effects of consumption or about the impact on the native Atlantic salmon species (which is currently endangered), when the altered salmon escape into the wild. Consumers would be unable to avoid the fish because there is currently no requirement to label any genetically engineered food.

The FDA today ends two days of public hearings by its Veterinary Medicine Advisory Committee (VMAC) on the GE salmon, after having released some scientific data on the genetically altered salmon just fifteen days prior. The VMAC will not accept public comments after it has met. A third public hearing, on September 21, will address the issue of whether the GE salmon, if approved, should be labeled as being genetically modified.

"Not only could there be health effects associated with consuming the salmon, but if they get out into the wild, which is inevitable, there will be no going back," Kucinich said, referring to a study finding that 5% of the sterilized fish were actually fertile.

“This is a complicated decision with known risks, some of which are irreversible, and yet the FDA is trying to sneak these manufactured fish onto the plates of the American people,” Kucinich said. “The public has only been given less than one month to prepare for these hearings.”

Kucinich has been a long time advocate for food safety and the environment. He has introduced right to know [legislation](#) that would provide a consumer oriented regulatory framework for Genetically Engineered (GE) plants, animals, bacteria, and other organisms that includes labeling of genetically engineered foods.

The letter can be found [here](#) .

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